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Senate

The Senate met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Precious Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations, sustaining us with Your goodness and mercy. Today, surround our Senators with the protection of Your divine favor, enabling them to obey Your command to be productive.

Lord, continue to strengthen them to follow Your precepts, fulfilling Your purposes as they find joy in Your presence. Keep them from the things that bring regret. Increase their faith, providing them with courage to live for Your glory.

We pray in Your strong Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 29, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. ROSEN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, well, as we all know, last night, the Senate voted by a substantial margin to move forward with a debate on a bipartisan infrastructure bill. I want to commend the group of Senators who worked with President Biden to reach a deal. The agreement will ultimately dedicate over a trillion dollars to strengthening virtually every major category of our country's fiscal infrastructure.

The vote last night also means that the Senate is on track to reach the two-track goal I laid out for this Chamber at the beginning of the month. The first track is the bipartisan bill focused on traditional, brick-and-mortar infrastructure projects. The second track is a budget reconciliation bill where Democrats will make historic investments in American jobs, American families, and efforts to fight climate change.

In order to start work on a reconciliation bill, the Senate must pass a budget resolution first, and we are on track for that as well.

It has been my goal to pass both the bipartisan infrastructure bill and a budget resolution during this work period. Some pundits have called that a tall order. I understand that. But because of the vote last night, the Senate

is now moving forward with the bipartisan infrastructure bill, and we are on track to pass both elements of the two-track strategy before we adjourn for the August recess. It took some prodding and a few deadlines, but it all has worked out for the better.

I want to take a step back and explain why these two bills are so important at this moment. For the past 2 years at the end of the Trump Presidency, the country was angry, divided, plagued by COVID, and our economy was stuck in the muck. The COVID washed over our country like a plague and was met by staggering incompetence from the Trump administration. America was sick, dying, and our economy was in shambles.

The discovery of the vaccine played no small part in our country's recovery. We Democrats pushed early on, last February and March—not this past one but a year ago—to increase funding for BARDA. Even then, the Trump administration was sort of being stingy about that money, but we got the money done. And the vaccine, as I said, played no small part in our country's recovery.

But elections have consequences. I say that to the American people. Elections have consequences. When we ran as Senate Democrats, when President Biden ran, we promised we would get the vaccines out; we would get the country's economy moving again; we would give hope to the middle class and those struggling to get to the middle class, where hope had been a distant and hazy frame on their horizon previously.

The Biden administration came in. We came in as a Senate majority. We immediately set to work beating the pandemic, with a relentless focus on getting the country vaccinated and getting our country back to normal.

Congressional Democrats swiftly passed the bold, strong American Rescue Plan, one of the largest Federal packages in American history, to keep

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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